

Virginia, asking that question penetratingly, repeatedly. Yet those figures given have proven to be false or completely underballed. It refused to tell the American people those long-term costs, and it refused to do the work, to ask the international community to join us in this effort.

It was bad enough to go it alone in the war, but it is inexcusable and incomprehensible that we choose to go it alone in the peace. One of the reasons we are facing \$87 billion is that the administration has stiff-armed the United Nations and has not been willing to bring other nations to this cause through the deftness of their diplomacy, the skill of their diplomacy.

Last year, President Bush had three decisive opportunities to reduce this \$87 billion bill. That first opportunity came when we authorized force. That authorization sent a strong signal about the intentions of the Congress to be united in holding Saddam Hussein accountable. I thought, and still believe, that was the right thing to do. It was appropriate for the United States to help stand up at the United Nations and hold those resolutions accountable. It set the stage for the U.N. resolution that finally led Saddam Hussein to let the weapons inspectors back into Iraq. That was correct.

When I voted to give that authority, I said the arms inspections are "absolutely critical in building international support for our case. That's how you make clear to the world we are contemplating war not for war's sake, but because it may be the ultimate weapons inspections enforcement mechanism."

The Bush administration, impatient to go into battle, stopped the clock on the inspections, against the wishes of key members of the Security Council, and despite the call of many in Congress who had voted to authorize the use of force as the last resort the President said it would be.

Despite his September promise to the United Nations to "work with the UN Security Council to meet our common challenge," President Bush rushed ahead on the basis of what we now know to be dubious, inaccurate, and perhaps even manipulated intelligence.

So the first chance for a true international response that would have reduced this bill, that would have brought other countries to contribute was lost.

Then there was a second opportunity. After the Iraqi people pulled down the statue of Saddam Hussein in the square in Baghdad, there was a moment when British and American forces had proven our military might and the world was prepared to come in and try to assume the responsibility for helping to rebuild Iraq.

Once again, Kofi Annan and the United Nations offered their help. Once again, this administration gave them the stiff arm. They said: No, thank you; we do not need your help. And we proceeded forward without building the

kind of coalition that would reduce the risk to our troops and without reducing the cost to the American people.

Then the third occasion was just the other day, when the President went to the U.N. General Assembly. Other nations again stood ready to help to provide troops and, hopefully, funds. All President Bush had to do was show a little humility and ask appropriately. Instead of asking, he lectured. Instead of focusing on reconstruction, his speech was a coldly received exercise in the rhetoric of redemption.

Kofi Annan offered to help. Again, we did not take them up on that offer in a way that was realistic. The President exhibited an attitude that was both self-satisfied and tone deaf simultaneously, once again raising the risk for American soldiers by leaving them alone, and once again raising the cost to the American people by leaving America alone.

I believe the President could have owned up to some of the difficulties. The President could have signaled or stated a willingness to abandon unilateral control over reconstruction and governance. Instead, he made America less safe—less safe—in a speech and in conduct that pushed other nations away rather than brought them to our cause and what should be rightfully the world's cause.

So what of this cost of the Iraqi operation?

In the fall of 2002, OMB Chief Mitch Daniels told us the costs of Iraq would be between \$50 and \$60 billion. It is now already more than \$100 billion more than that.

In January of this year, Secretary Rumsfeld said the same, and he added that "How much of that would be the U.S. burden, and how much would be other countries', is an open question."

Well, today it is not an open question; it is a closed question. We know the answer: The majority is being paid by the American taxpayers.

In March of this year, Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz testified in the Senate that Iraq is a "country that can really finance its own reconstruction, and relatively soon."

Did the Secretary mislead us or was the Secretary ignorant?

Again, in March, Secretary Powell testified in the Senate that "Iraq will not require the sorts of foreign assistance Afghanistan will continue to require."

When Larry Lindsey predicted the war may cost \$100 billion to \$200 billion, he was deemed so far off base by the White House that he was fired.

Now, a year later, Congress is set to appropriate over \$160 billion, and the costs are estimated to rise to \$350 billion to \$400 billion over 5 years. Even Larry Lindsey's estimates are now low.

With so much so wrong, Americans are looking to the White House for direction and leadership. They want, and they deserve, straight answers to straight questions.

How long will we be there? How much will it really cost? How many Amer-

ican troops will it take? And how long will it be before we do what common sense dictates and get the world invested in this effort by not treating Iraq as though it is an American prize, a loot of war but, rather, treating it as a nation that belongs in the community of nations, dealt with properly by the United Nations, as we did in Bosnia and Kosovo and Namibia and East Timor and in other parts of the world?

So far, the White House, with all of its evasion and explanation, has been a house of mirrors where nothing is what it seems and almost everything is other than what the President promised. But Americans are also looking to us in the Congress for leadership.

The President has talked a lot about sacrifice in recent weeks. In an address from the White House, he said of Iraq, "This will take time and require sacrifice." In his weekly radio talk, he warned that "This campaign requires sacrifice." Even in his State of the Union Address, the President issued a call for sacrifice saying: "We will not deny, we will not ignore, we will not pass along our problems to other Congresses, other presidents, and other generations." But that is exactly what we are doing if we leave this \$87 billion in its current form.

Also, there can be no doubt that the President has demanded that most of this sacrifice will come from the men and women in uniform. More than 300 troops have now already given their lives in Iraq. The Army is stretched too thin for its duties in Iraq. And troops who were promised that they would be home long ago remain in Iraq.

The President has called on the National Guard and Reserve at historic rates and put more than 200,000 guardsmen and reservists on active duty. The Pentagon has changed the rules so that a Guard unit's activation date does not start until the troops arrive in Iraq. That is a bookkeeping sleight of hand that keeps thousands of forces deployed even longer than they expected or were promised. And, incredibly, the President's call for sacrifice even included billing wounded troops for the cost of hospital meals. Fortunately, the Congress rectified that problem in this supplemental. But it is not yet law.

Despite all we are asking of the men and women in uniform, the bill we now debate appropriates \$87 billion simply by increasing the Federal deficit. It asks no sacrifice of anybody in the United States today who can afford it. This is an off-budget, deficit-spending free ride.

The amendment Senator BIDEN and I and others are offering changes that. It will pay the cost of this bill. It will pay the cost of the entire \$87 billion by simply repealing—not all, which I think we ought to do—a portion of the tax cut for the wealthiest Americans.

The Biden-Kerry amendment will ask those who can afford to pay this burden to do so, and make their contribution, make their sacrifice to the effort to